

Health Advisory: Public Health Precautions Related to Mass Trauma

March 18, 2004

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The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) is now using 4 types of documents to provide important information to medical and public health professionals, and to other interested persons:

Health Alerts convey information of the highest level of importance which warrants immediate action or attention from Missouri health providers, emergency responders, public health agencies, and/or the public.

Health Advisories provide important information for a specific incident or situation, including that impacting neighboring states; may not require immediate action.

Health Guidances contain comprehensive information pertaining to a particular disease or condition, and include recommendations, guidelines, etc. endorsed by DHSS.

Health Updates provide new or updated information on an incident or situation; can also provide information to update a previously sent Health Alert, Health Advisory, or Health Guidance; unlikely to require immediate action.

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Health Advisory
March 18, 2004

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SUBJECT: Public Health Precautions Related to Mass Trauma

[This Health Advisory is reproduced from a March 16, 2004, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Health Advisory.]

Based on recent events in Spain and Pakistan, clinicians, hospitals, and public health agencies should ensure that they are prepared to respond to mass trauma related to terrorist bombings. On March 11, 2004, bombs detonated on commuter trains in Madrid, Spain, killing more than 200 people. On Monday, March 15, 2004, police successfully disarmed bombs in a van outside the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, Pakistan. These events raise concerns about the potential for similar attacks that may result in mass trauma in the United States.

Mass trauma is defined as the injuries, death, disability, and emotional stress caused by a catastrophic event, such as a large-scale natural disaster or a terrorist attack. In the event of mass trauma, clinicians, hospitals, and public health agencies should be prepared to treat injuries, disability, and psychosocial (individual and community) stress. Clinicians, hospitals, and public health agencies need to also be prepared for a large number of fatalities.

Public health and medical care systems (including physical and mental health, public information, and social services) are encouraged to develop and review protocols for the treatment of mass trauma. They are also encouraged to develop and review hospital plans for dealing with surges in demand for emergency care due to complex injuries, psychosocial distress reactions, and the acute aggravation of chronic diseases that may be triggered by the psychological terror of such events.

Information on injuries and stress related to mass trauma can be found on the CDC Mass Trauma website at www.cdc.gov/masstrauma. This site is designed to provide information and preparedness and response tools to help public health professionals and clinicians prepare for and respond to mass trauma events. The website also contains fact sheets in English and Spanish for the public. Additional information resources and descriptions of relevant research studies can also be found on the site.

The remainder of this Health Advisory contains links to a number of specific resources related to mass trauma events.

General questions on these issues can be directed to the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Service's Center for Emergency Response & Terrorism at 573/526-4768. Questions on preparations for responding to the mental health issues that will arise following a mass trauma event should be directed to the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH) at 573/751-4970. DMH also has a disaster readiness website: www.dmh.missouri.gov/offices/diroffice/disaster/index.htm.

Fact Sheets for Public Health Professionals and Clinicians

Brain Injuries and Mass Trauma Events

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/professionals/brain_injuries.htm

Lesiones cerebrales y sucesos traumáticos masivos

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/professionals/brain_injuries_sp.htm

Coping with a Traumatic Event

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/professionals/coping_with_trauma.htm

Cómo manejar un suceso traumático

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/professionals/coping_with_trauma_sp.htm

Injuries and Mass Trauma Events

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/professionals/all_injuries.htm

Lesiones y sucesos traumáticos masivos

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/professionals/all_injuries_sp.htm

Preparedness Tools for Public Health Professionals and Clinicians

Explosions and Blast Injuries: A Primer for Clinicians

<http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/preparedness/primer.htm>

Mass Trauma Casualty Predictor

<http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/preparedness/predictor.htm>

Predicting Casualty Severity and Hospital Capacity

<http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/preparedness/capacity.htm>

Response Tools for Public Health Professionals and Clinicians

Mental Health Survey Instrument

<http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/response/mhsurvey.htm>

Rapid Assessment of Injuries from Mass Trauma Events

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/response/rapid_assessment.htm

Rapid Assessment of Mental Health (Mental Health/Crisis Intake Form)

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/response/mental_health.htm

Resources for Public Health Professionals and Clinicians

Glasgow Coma Scale

<http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/resources/gcscale.htm>

Medlineplus Health Information Website--Disasters and Emergency Preparedness

[http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/resources/\(http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/disastersandemergencypreparedness.html](http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/resources/(http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/disastersandemergencypreparedness.html)

Preparing for the Psychological Consequences of Terrorism: A Public Health Strategy

<http://search.nap.edu/books/0309089530/html/>

State and Local Health Department Websites

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/resources/state_departments.htm

Fact sheets in English and Spanish for the Public

Brain Injuries and Mass Trauma Events

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/brain_injuries.htm

Lesiones cerebrales y sucesos traumáticos masivos

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/brain_injuries_sp.htm

Burns

<http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/burns.htm>

Quemaduras

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/burns_sp.htm

Coping with a Traumatic Event

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping_with_trauma.htm

Cómo manejar un suceso traumático

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping_with_trauma_sp.htm

Injuries and Mass Trauma Events

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/all_injuries.htm

Lesiones y sucesos traumáticos masivos

http://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/all_injuries_sp.htm

Additional information on psychosocial stress as a result of a catastrophic event can be found at:

Government Agencies

Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH): www.dmh.missouri.gov/offices/diroffice/disaster/index.htm

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): www.fema.org

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): www.nimh.nih.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): www.samhsa.gov

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Website: www.dhs.gov

Non-profit Organizations

American Counseling Association: www.counseling.org

American Psychiatric Association: www.psych.org

American Red Cross: www.redcross.org

Disaster Mental Health Institute, University of South Dakota: www.usd.edu/dmhi

National Center for Child Traumatic Stress: www.nctsnct.org

National Mental Health Association (NMHA): www.nhma.org